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# Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Business, Elected and Community Leaders Share Their Vision for a Prosperous Southern California**

**Los Angeles, CA – April 5, 2012** – The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) day two of the 2012 Regional Conference and General Assembly included thanking outgoing officers for their service, welcoming incoming officers and listening to the perspectives of over 25 panelists about the vision and goals of the 2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) and how it benefits the Southern California region.

“I was honored to serve as President of SCAG as the agency developed its first Regional Transportation Plan that included a Sustainable Communities Strategy in accordance with SB 375, signed into law in 2008. I had the great fortune to travel to many public workshops in our region of 18 million residents and hear their ideas for more livable communities. This plan listens to our residents, 191 cities and the 6 counties and balances the resources needed to keep Southern California a vibrant, healthy, livable and economically sustainable region for future generations,” said Santa Monica Councilmember and SCAG President Pam O’Connor.

“Today is the beginning of a new opportunity for Southern Californian’s to welcome the benefits of growth in our region, but in a manner that respects the health and welfare of our residents. The six counties that comprise Southern California have been deeply impacted by the great recession with an estimated one million people still unemployed. The RTP/SCS is a 25 year plan that includes an economic strategy for adding an estimated 528,000 jobs per year. This is good news for our future,” stated Glen Becerra, Simi Valley Council Member and newly elected SCAG President.

“The investment strategy is large, but the returns they yield will far exceed the financeable term by serving our communities for fifty to seventy years into the future while providing jobs for today’s Californian’s. Transportation and housing impacts almost every facet of our lives, which is why a diverse list of moderators and panelists included stakeholders from labor, public health, business, transportation and economic experts who participated in this informative day,” said Hasan Ikhata, SCAG Executive Director.

Former Governor Gray Davis, Co-Chair of the Southern California Leadership Council (SCLC), participated in a panel discussion regarding the region’s global competitiveness. “SCLC supports SCAG’s 2012 – 2035 RTP/SCS and finds that this plan recognizes the critical importance of transportation and infrastructure to economic vitality, job creation and the quality of life for all Southern Californians. SCLC also finds that this RTP/SCS provides significant economic

benefits, honors the market forces, and provides local control and flexibility as it works to secure an integrated approach to land use, transportation, housing and environmental planning. Further, SCLC appreciates that this RTP/SCS will achieve the important GHG emission reduction targets and other identified benefits for our region.”

A number of other panelists highlighted the economic benefits of the plan, the importance of timely project delivery and regional collaboration. Ontario City Councilmember and Vice Chair of SCAG’s Transportation Committee, Alan Wapner, stressed the need for “local coordination and collaboration to ensure timely project delivery thereby maximizing the economic benefits of the plan.” Orange County Business Council Chief Economic Advisor, Dr. Wallace Walrod, added “the Southern California region has a very unique economic and business asset base. Strategic investments in key transportation projects that generate the best returns are important to the region’s job recovery and future economic competitiveness.” Greg McWilliams, President and CEO of Newhall Land and Farming Company, also added “due to constrained state and federal budgets, it is more important than ever that the public sector and private sector partner to ensure a healthy business environment. As a member of SCAG’s business advisory council, I am confident this plan will lead to a more prosperous Southern California.”

The Economic and Job Creation Analysis of SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy is available on the SCAG website at this link:

[http://rtpscs.scag.ca.gov/Documents/2012/draft/SR/2012dRTP\\_EconomicAnalysis.pdf](http://rtpscs.scag.ca.gov/Documents/2012/draft/SR/2012dRTP_EconomicAnalysis.pdf)

This year’s Regional Conference and General Assembly welcomed over 1,000 participants, the largest in SCAG’s history.

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### **About SCAG**

*SCAG is the nation’s largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 191 cities and more than 18 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to plan for a livable and sustainable Southern California now and in the future. For more information about SCAG’s regional efforts, please visit [www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov).*